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35 ~~SECRET~~

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D OSCAR CONTRERAS

On March 16, 1967, the American Embassy ~~received~~ ^{regarding (to)} a ~~call from~~ ^{that} [B. J. Payne, the American Consul in Tangier, whom ~~had~~ ^{said to} ~~met~~ ^{that} he had met a reporter that allegedly met Lee Harvey Oswald in Mexico City in 1963. [American Embassy turning Telegram # A-42 from American Consul Tangier, 3/16/67, CIA # 560; Wx-7241, Entry # 570, p 119, CIA # 737] The reporter had ~~not~~ ^{been} ~~been~~ ^{concerned,} advised him not to repeat the story. (CIA) The reporter asked the American Consul Tangier not to repeat his story because he feared losing his job. (CIA) }

The reporter claim
strongly that he had only
been ~~known~~ ^{known} to have had ~~any~~ ^{not} a fleeting contact with
Oswald, the reporter claimed to know only about Lee Harvey
Oswald's desire to travel to Cuba and the Embassy's unwillingness
to grant him a visa. (ibid) When B.J. Ragle asked the reporter
for permission to cable the story to the American Embassy, the reporter
stated that he feared losing his job. (ibid) The reporter explained that
Subsequent to the assassination, he had told his editor who had
advised him not to report ~~the story~~ ^{the reporter} (about his contact c. 1963)
it. (ibid) The reporter granted B.J. Ragle
permission to cable the story to the American Embassy when Ragle
promised that it would be handled with the greatest confidence. (ibid)
Ragle wrote that he thought the reporter was genuinely concerned about his job. (ibid)

See May 11, 1967, re letter from B.J. Ragle to the State Department, ^{dated} additional details of the reporter's story, were provided [Letter to Wesley D. Bowles, chief of Mexican political affairs, Office of Mexican affairs, Department of State from B.J. Ragle, American Counsel, Tangier, 5/11/67; W-X 7241 entry # 597, p. 114, C.I.A. # 741] The reporter alleged that he and some fellow students had met Lee Harvey Oswald as they attended the Cineclub at the Escuela de Filosofia (School of Philosophy) at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. (1b.d) Oswald told the group that he had gone to the National Autonomous University,

(3)

of Mexico looking for pro-Castro students who might help him
from California and was a member of a pro-Castro group in New Orleans. (ibid.) Oswald remained
with those students the rest of that day and evening, as well as the
following day. (ibid.) The writer described Oswald as a strange and introverted individual who
spoke very little Spanish. (ibid.)

On [redacted], the State Department forwarded a copy of Ruge's letter to
the Central Intelligence Agency, on [redacted], [The Committee could not determine
when the State Dept. forwarded the letter to the CIA]
[redacted] On June 14, 1967, CIA Headquarters
concerned the Mexico City Station about Ruge's informant
[redacted] [Despatch from the Director to Mexico City, 6/14/67, HHHW 15557; Wx-7241
Entry # 616, p. 117, CIA # 744] The CIA Headquarters considered Ruge's
report "the first piece of substantive info about Oswald's sojourn
in Mexico" since the assassination. (ibid.) Consequently, they ^{had} called
that though they understood the source's reluctance to become involved
"the fact remains that this info cannot continue to be withheld or
concealed" (ibid.) Headquarters instructed the Mexico City Station to get the
identity of the source from Ruge. In addition, Headquarters asked the Mexico
City Station to bear in mind the allegation that Oswald was a homosexual.
(ibid.) The final sentence of the despatch; "It is our hope that the facts
obtained through these interviews will help to confirm that several of
Barrion's allegations about involvement of anti-Castro Cubans, CIA, etc. are
false," (ibid.) proclaimed the Central Intelligence Agency's motives for
pursuing the story.

On June 29, 1967, the Mexico City Station cabled Headquarters that
a station officer had gone to Tampico where he had interviewed
Ruge's source, Oscar Contreras. [Cable from Mexico City to the Director, June 1967
6/29/67; Wx-7241 entry # 622, p. 118, CIA # 745] The cable reported that
Contreras was a reporter for El Sol (a newspaper, The Sun) in Tampico; was
once 30 years old; married with three children; studied law at
the National Autonomous University of Mexico from 1960 to 1964; belonged to a
pro-Castro Cuban group at UNAM; was persecuted by the Mexican police for
this affiliation and moved to ^{UNAM} Tampico to escape the persecution.

[Cable from Mexico City to the Director, Mex 1950, 6/25/67; Wx-7241, entry # 62; p.118, CIA # 745]

Contreras told the Mexico City Station official that he and four other individuals had met Oswald as they exited a roundtable discussion held at the School of Philosophy at UNAM. Contreras stated that Oswald had made inquiries on the UNAM campus about pro-Cuban groups and had been directed to his group. Contreras noted that the group ^{though} mistrusted Oswald fearing ^(1.b.d) he was a "CIA provocateur," ^(1.b.d) they allowed Oswald ^{to remain with} them that day and night, and part of the following day. (1.b.d)

Contreras stated that Oswald never mentioned assassination but kept emphasizing that he had to get to Cuba. In addition Oswald ^{had} exhibited no homosexual tendencies while he was with the group. (1.b.d)

→ [When Contreras was asked to identify the other four individuals, he refused to reveal their names because he feared that informing on them might endanger his family]

~~The Mexico City Station asked Headquarters if they wanted to know who had met Lee Harvey Oswald~~ ^{whether} ~~Contreras turned (1) to smuggling the Contreras allegation~~ (1.b.d)

On July 4, 1967, Headquarters called the Mexico City Station that Contreras' story should be explored to the fullest even though he ^{might} have fabricated it. [Cable from the Director to Mexico City, 7/4/67, DIR 16823, Wx-7241, Entry 626, p.119, CIA # 746] Headquarters suggested that the F.B.I. handle the story. (1.b.d) The following day, July 5, 1967, the Mexico City Station cabled that it preferred turning Contreras' ^{case} over to the Mexican authorities and the F.B.I. [Cable from Mexico City to the Director, 7/5/67, Mex 1991; Wx-7241, Entry 627, p.119, CIA # 746] The same day, the Chief of Station informed the Agent of Contreras'

story, but asked him not to take any action without previously consulting the Mexico City Station. [Wemo to Segat, 7/5/67 from chief of

Stadom; Wx-7241, entry 628, p. 119. C1A # 746
Tuesday 16 November

On July 10, 1967, Berkeley Division "SAC" wrote a memo on Oscar Contreras delineating the results of a [Mexican government] review and attached a [Mexican] check of Oscar Contreras' file. [Items from

[JKB] re Oscar Contreas, 7/10/67; Wx. 7241, Entry # 634, p. 120, C.A. # 747]

Victoria, Tasmania. The memo also reported that a newspaper

article appearing in Excelsior listed Oscar Contreras as a signer of a protest for the Bogotá Ecumenical Revoluntion which had been formed mid-1961. [The leaders of the group were Victor Manuel Bernal, Carlos

formed mid-1961. [The leaders of the group were Victor Warner, Charles

Andaluz, Hugo Castro, Aranda, Antenor, Tenorio, Adams, José Guzman, Jiménez, Carbo

Otay Tojedra, Daniel Molina, Bruno Salvey, Humberto Hernández, Oscar González, ...
... Pasqual

Adam Gómez, Pedro Saenz, Celedonio, Alberto Gómez, José Eduardo, Rosalí, Juan

Sallana, Walter Roger Passadó, Vicente Gorlizaga, Rubén Fernández
Pérez, José [71]

Dorado & James Ober) The memo speculated that Cuban probably

signed the protocol as a front man to protect the real leaders of the
U.S.A.

group (b) 1 station Headquarters

The Princess City submitted the information to HQs the following day in the format of the attached chart. 87

26/6/17 : 11:22 AM 81 "15 - 111-617-12

~~There is no further information in the Oswald "P" file concerning Contreras. The CIA never operated a 201 file on him.~~

~~It is apparent from the file review that the Central
Intelligence Agency was originally interested in the information~~

~~allegation because it felt that Convair might be helpful in solving New Orleans District Attorney's problems at~~

the time was conducting an investigation of the assassination) all information about involvement of anti-Castro Cubans and CIA today. When,

E. Cubana Airlines

of the Senate Select Committee on
Governmental Operations

In Book II of the final report on [the performance of the intelligence agencies in the investigation of the John F. Kennedy Assassination] the CIA is criticized for its apparent failure to fully pursue leads surrounding the assassination of President Kennedy and then to fully report to the Warren Commission the results of the investigation they did undertake.

One such lead discussed was a reported five-hour delay (6:00 P.M. EST to 11:00 P.M. EST) of a Cubana flight from Mexico City to Havana the evening of President Kennedy's assassination, November 22, 1963. [The Investigation of the Assassination of John F. Kennedy: Performance of the Intelligence Agencies, Book II, Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations, 4/23/76, 7:30. Senate Report No. 94-755] The most intriguing aspect of the SSC account involved the alleged delay of a Cubana flight to await the arrival at 10:30 PM EST of a [ibid p. 60] private twin-engined aircraft. The aircraft deposited an unidentified passenger who boarded the Cubana aircraft without customs clearance and traveled to Havana in the pilot's cabin. [ibid p. 61]

The House Select Committee on Assassinations examined the documents connected to that lead to determine whether the facts which were known by the CIA about the "alleged" flight warranted further investigation and what investigation was undertaken; b) whether any of that information was reported to the Warren Commission; and c) whether the known facts suggested any involvement in the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

A chronology of the activity of the CIA on this lead appears in the information which is the possession of the agency.

To be done at CIA

The source of that lead was an [Italian diplomat, Mario Vittorio] who allegedly was on the same flight. []

Analyses

In the ~~CSA~~ 1977 Inspector General report, the CIA attempted to refute several "macaromas" in the Senate Select Committee report regarding the "alleged" Cuban Airlines flight. That was apparently the only follow-up by the Agency on the lead after the Senate report appeared.

The Inspector General's report corrected the statement in the Senate report that the "Central Intelligence Agency had no information indicating that a following investigation was conducted to determine the identity of the passenger and had no further information on the passenger, and no explanation for why a following investigation was not conducted" [Investigation of the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy: Performance of the Intelligence Agencies, Book II, Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations, 4/23/76, p 30 Senate Report No 94-755] The Inspector General report explained that the Mexican authorities were asked about the worked flight delay, although there was no recorded response. [1977 CIA I C Report, TAB B, p 11] In addition, the Inspector General report stated that the Central Intelligence Agency conducted regular surveillance of Cuban flights, filing cable reports to Headquarters [ibid p 11] There was one [united] CIA surveillance team [SIRE] that observed arrivals and departures of Cuban flights, reporting any unusual [and providing ^{numerous} copies of flight manifests] [ibid p 11] [The Mexican government had its own surveillance team at ²⁴ the airport which provided the CIA with photographs of passengers and records of passenger lists of individuals travelling to Cuba. (ibid p 11)] In addition, [teleme²⁴ tag operations (LIEVOS)] against the Cuban Embassy provided transcripts of conversations between the Cuban Airlines office and the Mexican Airline Control Office. (ibid p 11)

The [SIRE] Transcripts

~~2~~ The [LIENVOY] transcripts record a series of ^{ed} ~~concern's~~ discussions about the status of the November 22, 1963 ~~delays~~ Cubana flight-- when it arrived and when it departed.

The transcripts show that the flight arrived at the airport at 1620 hours. (All times used will be Mexico

City time to avoid confusion) Mexico City time. (HSCA Staff Review of November 22, 1963 [LIENVOY] transcripts)

Prior to the arrival of the aircraft, one person stated that the aircraft was due at 1630 hours and "it will go" at 1730, suggesting a quick turnaround that would have reduced unloading and loading time, ^{of a} as well as servicing to a relatively short period.

(ibid) However, the ^{key} report on the departure of the aircraft was a statement at 2040 hours that the aircraft had departed for Cuba five minutes earlier, i.e., 2035 hours. (ibid)

Based on the above, [Lienoy] which was the only record that existed in the CIA files on the arrival and departure times of the Cubana flight] [Neither ²⁴ [fire nor (the Mexican surveillance team] reported the arrival or departure flights of the Nov. 22, 1963 Cubana flight to CIA] the DCI concluded that there were major differences between the manner the Senate Select Committee ^{what} reported about the ^{alleged} delayed Cubana flight and the known facts. The Cubana flight was on the ground in Mexico City for a total of four hours and about ten minutes. It was not delayed five hours as reported in Book II [The Investigation of the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy, Performance of the Intelligence Agencies, Book II, Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations, 4/23/76, p. 30 Senate Intelligence Report No. 94-785] The Cubana flight departed at 2035 hours Mexico City time, 55 minutes ahead of the alleged arrival at 2130 of a private flight with a secret passenger (ibid p. 30) The 2035 departure differed with the Senate Intelligence Committee Report that the Cubana flight departed at 2200 hours (ibid p. 31)

In addition, the DDCI staff concluded that in view of the surveillance coverage of the Mexican August 24 by both the CIA and Mexican government, it was unlikely that the alleged activity involving the female born -engaged aircraft and passenger would have gone unnoticed. (b.dg.)
1974 CIA IC Report, TAB C, p.12

Despite what is now known about the alleged slaying of the
Cuban Airline flight and the unidentified passenger, the Warren
Commission may have wanted to ^{allege} ~~justify~~ these ~~suspicions~~ which would
convince, and satisfy itself that these circumstances did not
indicate foreign involvement in the assassination. The CIA
contributed to those suspicions by not giving the ~~stiller~~ and explaining

circumstances which could shed light on other sensitive upcoming events.

The Committee has documented instances where the CIA failed to fully furnish information to the Warren Commission at its behest to not lay bare extremely sensitive sources and methods of intelligence. The [CIA] ~~SECRET~~ [LIFIRE] operations certainly fall within that category.